

24 OCT 1969 *Tajima*
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For Your Information.

Today the Federal Records Officers met at National Archives.

There is a new attitude in the House side of Congress concerning the records disposition procedure. No one knows how the Senate feels.

Chairman Nedzi of the Joint Committee on Disposition of Executive Papers, at the insistence of member Mr. Pettis, has introduced HR 14300 to eliminate Congress from the records disposal review procedure. This Bill changes the current law and procedure so that the Committee would be abolished and the GSA Administrator then would approve requests for disposal of Agency records. The Congressmen feel they know nothing about the records involved and that they are "rubber-stamping" the lists the National Archives reviews and submits to them with recommendations for approval. GSA has no position yet nor has BOB. No one is sure how many Congressmen will part with any control over the Executive.


Our Agency can live with this change. We have received about 120 special records disposal approvals from the Congressional Committee over the past twenty years. We can get them from GSA Administrator just as easily in the future. Most of our records disposal authorities are based on the General Records Schedules used Government wide.

I feel personally concerned over the proposal because I feel the involvement of Congress has given considerable strength in our Records Schedules and Records Program. The name of the GSA Administrator will not be attractive or helpful. Further, his political position will leave his actions open for criticism by subsequent Congresses of a different political view. The value of Congressional Committee-approved records disposal was proven when the Pearl Harbor investigation dug into Navy records and found the Admirals could not be accused of destroying evidence because the disposals were made via authorized schedules. A similar situation occurred during an investigation of Defense Materials Procurement records following a change of Administration.

A copy of the proposed Bill is attached. You may wish to send the extra copy on to the Legislative Counsel, because I understand this Bill has not been given much publicity or distribution. Since my Master's Thesis dealt with the preservation and disposition of Executive papers and the related laws since 1889, I may have a few references if the Counsel calls. For that work in 1962 I followed the procedure through

GSA and visited with the aides of the Joint Committee on Disposition of Executive Papers up on the hill. I agree that all of them know nothing about records value or the evaluation procedure and the Committee has been "rubber-stamping" the Archives recommendations. But, the opportunity and channel was always open for them to control Executive papers when necessary. Congress has used it from time to time in Government and Industry. In fact at present the IBM records are frozen and none may be destroyed until the current Government investigations are completed.

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CIA Records Administration Officer

Attachment: H.R. 14300